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## Sparkle Is Stylish in Holiday Clothes for Houses

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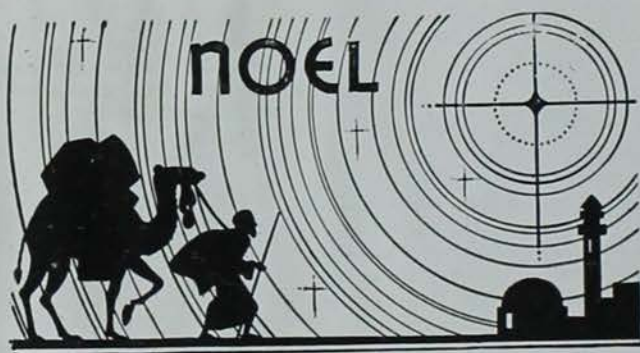
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## Instead of a Tree, the French Set Up

# A Tiny Manger Scene

by Gay Starrak

**T**HE creche, a pictured story of the Nativity, is used as the Christmas tree is used, to glorify that night of nights, Christmas Eve.

In a small Italian town, St. Francis of Assisi created this scenic representation of the Holy Night at Bethlehem. It was used for the first time 712 years ago in this little town in Italy, to teach and inspire those simple folk who could not read.

Arising in Italy in the thirteenth century, the idea soon spread to other countries, and by the end of the fifteenth century it was established as a custom in England, France, Germany, Spain and many other European countries.

The first Nativity scenes were composed of only a few essential characters: the Infant Jesus, Mary, Joseph, an ox, an ass and possibly one or two sheep. Great care was given to dressing the figures, which were clothed in the finest of silks. The early scenes were noted for their sweetness and simplicity. Sometimes a scene was depicted of shepherds in the field with their flocks around them. Though originally used in churches, its use soon spread to domestic groups.

**D**URING the fifteenth century the creche underwent a notable change. It passed from the primitive and simple to the elaborate and ornate. Additional personages were added to the original characters; also various animals, such as camels, elephants and leopards, were included in the scenes. Even the setting was sometimes changed. Instead of the manger, shops and buildings sometimes formed the background.

Displays were the work of great artists and were especially elaborate in

large churches. One of the most beautiful creches of this period was made by Charles III, king of Naples. It is now

## Sparkle Is Stylish in

# Holiday Clothes for Houses

by Betty Shoemaker

**S**TRANGE as it seems, Christmas did not originate in Christianity. It was first a pagan holiday called Saturnalia, which was a celebration of the coming of longer days.



Holly

touches that made modern Christmas decorations different from those of the old Saturnalia.

You may decorate your house both outside and in. The out-of-doors decorations may be very simple and still very effective. A small lighted tree is lovely.

Red candles, placed in saucers filled with sand, or red lamps in candlestick holders (from the ten-cent store) may be put in the front windows of the house. Six or seven tall candles may also be grouped on a foundation of evergreen branches placed on a stand in the window. Two such tables would give a nicely balanced effect. And please leave the shades up!



A Wreath



A Candle

Wreaths for the door may be made of holly, or from Irish hemlock, Irish juniper, spruce and rosemary evergreens. A double wire circle, six inch frame, may be used as a base. Pine cones may be woven into the wreath, and red oil-cloth used for the bows, since snow and rain leaves it crisp.

Instead of the large wreath on the door, a silhouette of a Christmas tree may be made of beaverboard and painted, then Christmas tree lights put on it. Another unusual tree may be made of ten small wreaths, wired together. The trunk of this tree is made

of beaverboard covered with smilax. This may be used for the front window or door.

Christmas may mean a lofty tree trimmed in red and silver, but sometimes there isn't

much room for a large tree. A clever expression of Christmas is found in the miniature tree, trimmed with the smallest balls that can be found, and covered

(Turn to page 12)



A Tree

in a historical museum near Naples. The University of Kansas owns one of the finest displays in the United States.

This custom died out in many countries, but it is now being revived. Recently it has taken root on our side of the globe. Since much imagination enters into the assembling of these scenes, there are no two alike. It is not the space nor the spending of money that make the creche successful, but the ingenuity and art of the builder. Some artists use exquisite pottery figures, others use wood, cork or plaster of paris.

**T**HE purely reverent has not always been the theme. Gaily painted figures, angels with polka dot wings, kings with whiskers and full array, combine humor with reverence. Other carved figures are brilliantly colored and mounted on a music box which plays "Silent Night, Holy Night." A beautiful effect may be obtained by a star whose rays light up the tiny Gothic figures.

Creches make simple and effective mantel and table decorations for the Christmas season. They may also be built near or around the base of the tree to bring a touch of the real Christmas spirit.



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**Holiday Houses**

(Begins on page 6)

with a bell jar that has several sizes of gold stars pasted on it.

With candles in the windows, a green wreath on the door, a tree decorated in green, red and white, and the Yule log burning, the Christmas picture is complete.

**Serve Yourself**

(Begins on page 2)

This is your opportunity to make your favorite dessert—make the best of it.

If you've an extra man left over, better make him the garnish-man. Arm him with plenty of parsley, lettuce, lemon, mayonnaise and other fixins and let him use his ingenuity. Insist on his approval of every dish before it leaves the kitchen.

A trusted friend could well be placed as table overseer to more or less manage the dining room. Do it yourself, if possible, and at the same time try to keep yourself in reserve for any hitches in the kitchen.

But what if your kitchen is entirely too tiny for all this behind-the-scenes fun? Run, get out the sandwich grill, and your neighbor's, too, if possible. A sandwich grill is an Aladdin's lamp at a buffet supper.

Appoint someone "Chief Griller in Charge of Non-burned Toast Offerings" and commence proceedings immediately.

Of course, you'll have plenty of fillings varieties laid out at his elbow. It's a good idea to make up several mixed fillings especially for the occasion. Then you can have the good old standbys—peanut butter, cheeses, nuts (they put pep in many a sandwich), cold meats, broiled bacon, sardines and so on—well out in front so that your guests may make up their own combinations.

As for mixed fillings, try these combinations: Cream cheese mashed with chopped raisins and nuts; cream cheese and jam or jelly; pimiento cheese and pickle relish; chopped tongue, chopped pickle and salad dressing; equal quantities of chopped figs, dates and raisins, moistened with lemon juice.

And after the food? Yes, each person carries his own dishes back to the kitchen. You may even be so fortunate as to have them offer to clean up the kitchen and dishes, who knows?

Snowy, cooked rice forms the basis for this red, white and green supper salad, which combines gracefully with the holiday decorations and is as delicious as it sounds. Combine: 2 cups cooked rice with 1 cup cooked or canned peas, 4 tablespoons chopped pimiento, 4 tablespoons pickle relish, 3 tablespoons grated cheese, 1 teaspoon salt, and 3 tablespoons celery. Serve on crisp lettuce with French dressing or mayonnaise.

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